think anything you bestow on them to be lost to you even though they may be as black as ... the one to whom Phillip preached Christ."[78] While innate differences in people and groups need not and cannot be ignored, there never need arise any resulting political difference, save the acknowledgement of varying *individual* (as opposed to categorical) capacities.[79] Self-defense of race (or gender, or culture) is then but self-defense of human beings whom the *aggressors* have persecuted on the grounds of race. *Therefore, proactive defense of race becomes highly suspect.*[80] Race itself need not be relevant to defense of race.[81]

THE NECESSITY OF EXCLUSIVITY

I also once again restate the following obvious rule, here called the Whale-Hunter's Maxim:[82] What is forbidden, allowable, or compulsory in one group[83] need not be in another. The fact that Inuit kill whales, that Orthodox Jews prohibit Sabbath work, that the Vestal Virgins of Rome were supposed to stay virgins, that in Joan of Arc's epoch the sexes had to wear gender-specific clothing, that lesbians choose female partners, heterosexual women choose men and bisexual women choose either or both, that Jains refrain from hurting any living thing larger than a microbe, that some people consider suicide brave and others call it cowardly, that Muslims abstain from pork, pronounce the capital sentence on adultery and endorse polygamy, in no way entitles, compels or forbids other people to do likewise.

Identity is always sweet, I've said,[84] so here's my identity's confession: I have always appreciated the special physical beauty of each racial exemplar: the unequalled richness of black skin tones, from coffee to chocolate to charcoal, the extraordinary proudness of shape awarded an Amerindian face by high cheekbones, the blazing darkness of Asian eyes within their Mongolian folds, or for that matter the sapphire eyeballs which some Caucasians are fortunate enough to possess. Now that I have begun to learn how to make platinum prints, the peculiar characteristics of that photographic process, which cannot approach the darkest blacks of silver printing[85] but which offers an unrivaled subtlety and range in the whites, have drawn my eye to subjects best calculated to enrich my paper with platinum's beautiful unearthly pallor. More than ever I admire Harry Callahan's silver gelatin prints, where everything is white upon white. I enjoy the tint of my own skin. I like my sisters' fair, pinkish-pale features. I am proud of the people I come from. Any human being has the right to take joy in his lineage, or, better yet, be proud of it.[86] "Deliver me from a city built on the site of a more ancient city, whose materials are ruins, whose gardens cemeteries."[87] Thus writes Thoreau, but *his* organization is the peculiarly nineteenth-century American one of transcendental solitude. So often I've heard parents tell their children a heroic tale, doubtless gloriously exaggerated, about what some dead great-grandfather once did; or they'll impart some ancient origin-legend by which they define themselves. In 1389 Prince Lazar, the Serbian

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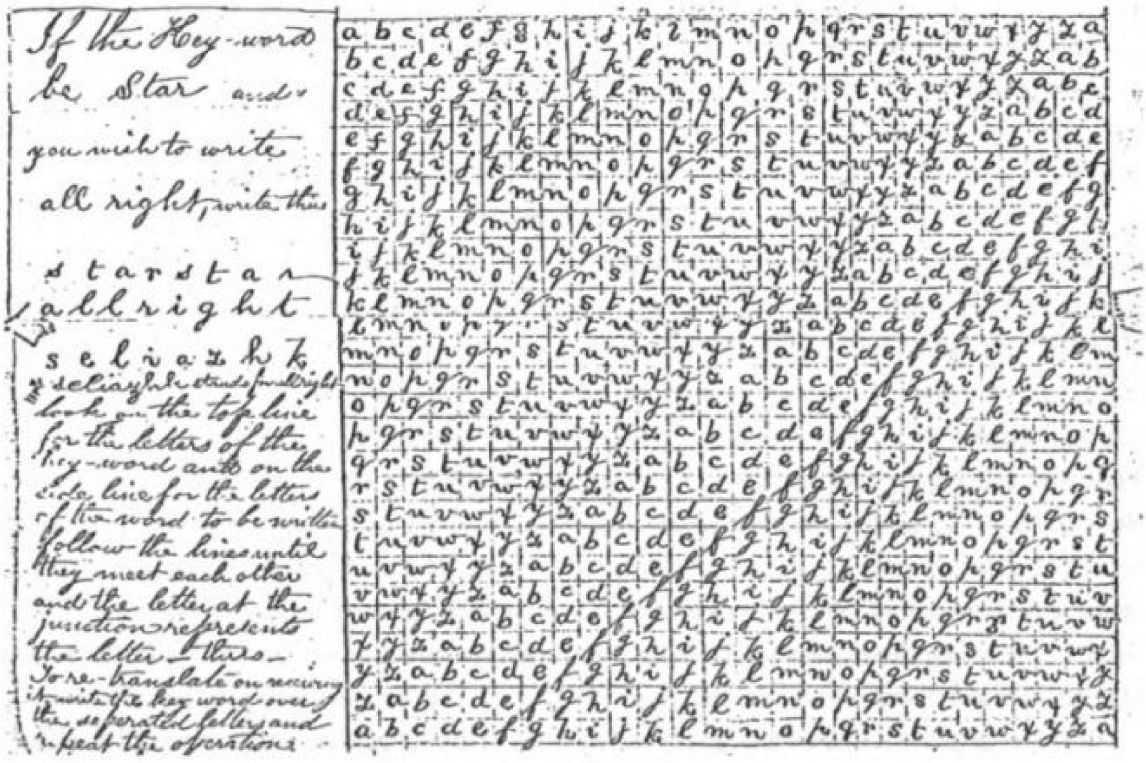
leader, died at the hands of the Turks; and in 1998 I met Serbs who literally still wept over it.[88] While such historial grievances encourage the manufacture of dangerous moral ends, such rich and various significances of group identification as this never-ending commemoration of Prince Lazar imparts an ethos, a clan personality, a specialness which raises individuals up from the lonely atomic level. (Albanian Kosovars have painted a less flattering portrait of Lazar, and by the Whale-Hunter's Maxim they own every right to do so.)

The eighteenth-century Korean crown princess Lady Hyegyong[89] justifies her final memoir thus: "I could not die without telling my grandson what I know of his ancestors; it would have been outside normal human sentiment. And so, resisting death and weeping blood, I wrote this record."[90]

Yes, yes, again I grant the susceptibility of race, caste, organization, lineage, to pompous and at times poisonous illusions; all the same, should a not particularly powerful individual pass through life believing, as the very powerful Caesar also did, that in him pulses the blood of a goddess, where's the harm? Solidarity, optimism, a sense of kinship, a hope for greater freedom (in brief, for "rising up"), when these qualities are unchecked, they do tend naturally to manufacture goals of domination, but as long as they *are* checked, which mostly proves to be the case, since most hopes get disappointed on this earth, then aren't hope's adherents better off? If a Pole can recognize from appearance and mannerism other Poles, and if his sense of familiarity brings him reassurance, on what basis should we deny him this comfort? This is why I used to sympathize with my Korean mother-in-law's disapproval of my color,



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language and creed,[91] at the same time that I resented her for it. She would have preferred that her daughter marry somebody who was "one of us." How could I blame her? She could not speak much English; I couldn't speak Korean; she was a churchgoer and I wasn't; I was one of *them.*

When group identity becomes an island in hostility's sea, imminence justifies clannishness all the more: "The Jew is to another Jew the only man with whom he can say 'we.'"[92]

Identity is continuity; identity is an immortality whose precariousness poignantly appears in the medieval *Egil's Saga*, when the eponymous hero composes a poem after the death of his most-loved son. The young man had been at least in part a placeholder, loved because his existence continued the father's bloodline. (Where on earth don't we find this sentiment? In 431 B.C., Euripides gives one of his characters "the wish to ask how I should raise up seed unto myself."[93] In 1995, some careful Japanese parents still hire detective agencies to ascertain that their childrens' potential spouses don't belong to the "untouchable" Burakumin caste. "They don't want any strange blood," my interpreter explains.)[94] And now the lineage has been broken.[95] Egil utters this stylized cry:

> No purse can pay
> The fair price
> Due him who endures
> The death of a son,
> Till a boy is born
> In his brother's place
> To be fostered and fill
> The family void.[96]

I myself am part Norwegian and part Swedish, with a few platelets of German blood swirled in. —"Oh, so you are mixed!" a Serb exclaimed in knowing disgust. —Really, of course, I am a white American; it's not easy for me to tell Swedes and Norwegians apart by sight or habit; to myself, therefore, as to many a "person of color," I am simply Caucasian—a monolithic enough designation, by all means, but one to which I have no objection. —Do I have a "preference" for my own race? — That sincerest gauge of racial and interracial aesthetics, sexual attraction, suggests the contrary. Long ago I realized that my own children would probably be of mixed race. My friends and associates come in all colors. If I did have such a preference, however, that would be my business alone. I pity racial and sexual separatists of all colors, who imprison themselves as they fence others out; but by the Whale-Hunter's Maxim everyone has the right to live in the house that suits him.[97]

To the extent that a community defines itself by anything other than bloodline (customary formulations: (a) all of *us* partake in quality X because our founders did,

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and (b) outsiders tend to be deficient in X), it must direct its members' behavior. Did every collectivity prohibit or allow the same things, the distinctions between them would become almost meaningless. Nor ought any group be compelled in every instance to allow to another what it permits its own members. If I am a self-declared atheist, denied communion at a Catholic mass, I am a fool for complaining.

We've agreed that defense of class lacks justice when it fails to distinguish between unequal human capacity, unequal luck and unequal goodness.[98] Similarly, defense of race must be deficient *when it sees inferior human capacity in alien habits and characteristics.*[99] Just as Trotsky should have done,[100] and for the same reason, we need to extend ourselves, to be empathetic bridges. When we forget that the identity of the other is as sweet to him as ours to us, we break the Golden Rule, the spirit of the social contract.

THE PELASGIAN DILEMMA

But the Whale-Hunter's Maxim has disquieting implications. Let's suppose for the time being (as we might not necessarily do in the chapter on defense of animals)[101] that eating pork is fundamentally legitimate. Nonetheless, you and I have never tasted pig-meat, since in our locality doing so is forbidden by creed. By the Whale-Hunter's Maxim, such a prohibition is also legitimate. One day I join a certain persecuted minority cult called the Pig Eaters. In obedience to the rules of my new organization, I decide to taste pork, knowing full well (this is the point) that you in your horror and fear of ritual pollution will feel obliged to enforce the communal prohibition upon me, by violence if necessary.

This is not at all the same as knowing full well that you will violently enforce defense of race upon me because I was born black. In the second case, simple imminence would define my self-defense: I am a human being with all the rights of the self, and you dislike something about me which I am powerless to change, so any harm you inflict on me constitutes unjust aggression. In the first case, however, I am a separatist: I disturb the peace; I *choose* to do something which will bring your violence down upon me. Had I refrained from becoming unlike you, I would have remained safe.

No matter that the Whale-Hunter's Maxim justifies me! I am therefore, in a sense, complicit in whatever violence occurs. Should you attack me, with or without warning, menace, cruelty, imminence; and should I kill you in self-defense, I am your premeditated murderer.

In the moral calculus we state that it is never justified to harm someone based on whom he is.[102] This is why it was wrong for the Bolsheviks to repress people for reasons based solely on their class origin. This is why it remains wrong for the Ku Klux Klan to kill or intimidate blacks. But if I put myself in harm's way to be intimidated, if I make that intimidation possible, if I am Gandhi, if I am Martin

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